

A2 8. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that gene sequences coding for exported polypeptides are selected.

9. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that gene sequences coding for secreted polypeptides are selected.

10. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that genes which code for polypeptides and which are necessary for the development of the vital from the resistant form selected.

11. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that genes which code for polypeptides and which are necessary for development of the resistant form from the vital form are selected.

12. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that in step (A) test systems selected from in-vitro systems, cell culture systems, tissue culture systems and animal models are used as natural environment for determining the viability and survivability of the gene-deficient microorganism.

13 15. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the identified genes are used to produce primers with whose aid corresponding genes from related microorganisms, subspecies or/and species are indentified.

16. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that in step(B) there is identification of specific active ingredients which influence the expression, presentation and/or function of the essential polypeptides, in particular immunologically active substances, binding partners of the polypeptides or fragments thereof or/and inhibitory substances.

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17. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that step(B) comprises a determination of the immunogenic potential of the polypeptides or/and fragments thereof, with the identified genes being expressed and subsequently a Western blot analysis being carried out or/and in that the identified polypeptides or fragments thereof are used to carry out a vaccination in cell culture or in an animal model, and the induction of a specific immune response is observed.

18. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that step (B) comprises a determination of the binding potential of the polypeptides or fragments thereof by screening of substance libraries, surface display methods, crystallographic analysis or/and computer modeling.

19. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the diagnostic, preventive or /and therapeutic agents are provided in then form of passive vaccines or vaccines.

20. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the diagnostic, preventive or/and therapeutic agents comprise inhibitory substances, in particular expression inhibitors or/and enzyme inhibitors.

21. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 22, characterized in that test systems selected from in-vitro systems, cell culture systems, tissue culture systems and animal models are used as natural environment to determine the viability or/and survivability of the gene-deficient microorganisms.

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32. (Amended) A method as claimed in claim 22, characterized in that the identification of the protein-encoding DNA section takes place by expression in a host organism and detection of the presence of an expression product.